



The Texas A&M University System
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<http://utcm.tamu.edu>

Request for Preliminary Proposals (RFPP)

Submission Deadline: Monday, September 22, 2008

The University Transportation Center for Mobility (UTCM) invites researchers from the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) and academic groups to submit Preliminary Proposals as the first step in the approval process for projects to be awarded in FY 09.

UTCM Background

UTCM was designated as one of up to 60 University Transportation Centers nationwide by the passage of SAFETEA-LU in August, 2005. As such, UTCM is part of The University Transportation Centers Program (UTCP), which is administered by the Research and Innovative Technology Administration within USDOT. The mission of the UTCP is "To advance U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines comprising transportation through the mechanisms of education, research, and technology transfer at university-based centers of excellence." More information on the UTCP can be found at <http://utc.dot.gov/>. The UTCM operates under a UTCP grant of \$1.5 million/year for 4 years.

UTCM Theme

The theme of the UTCM is "Improving the Quality of Life by Enhancing Mobility." Preliminary Proposals should present ways to accomplish this objective through projects or programs in research, education and technology transfer.

Research Projects

Research projects shall encompass one or more of the Center's four Research Focus Areas:

- Coast-to-coast, border-to-border mobility
- Rural public transportation
- Congestion management and mitigation
- Innovative financing

Coast-to-coast, border-to-border mobility. This Research Focus Area is intended to address all modes and the linkages between them from a regional and national viewpoint. A breakdown in the transportation system in one area of the country may affect the entire system and the country as a whole. The ability to analyze and mitigate this type of situation, and identify "chokepoints" and how they affect the nationwide transportation system, would be greatly beneficial. UTCM seeks to develop a national model to predict the impact of such a failure and to aid in analyzing proposed mitigation measures, and welcomes other research that would positively impact this area.

Rural public transportation. This Research Focus Area represents an opportunity for UTCM to make a difference in the quality of life for rural people. Research topics could include better routing methods, the use of technology in rural transit systems, safety issues, and more. In Texas and contiguous states, many areas of opportunity exist for such studies, including the Colonias (a series of economically disadvantaged small communities along the



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Texas/Mexico Rio Grande border), the Mississippi Delta, and the Four Corners area of the American Southwest, among others.

Congestion management and mitigation. UTCM seeks to expand TTI's current efforts in congestion management and mitigation, provide support for expanding the estimates of benefits from mobility improvement programs and projects, and set the stage for a major, long-term research initiative in this area.

Innovative financing. The transportation infrastructure system continues to be adversely impacted from the double-edged sword of ever-increasing vehicle miles traveled combined with decreasing resources available for both new construction and the improvement of existing facilities. Alternative sources of funding for transportation improvements and new construction should be considered. In addition, Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) have the potential to generate revenue that can be used to support other infrastructure needs, such as transit systems. UTCM encourages proposals for projects that would result in a better understanding of the policy implications and implementation issues involved with innovative financing options.

All research projects sponsored by UTCM shall have significant student involvement and a technology transfer component, which may include plans for publication.

Education Projects

UTCM's education activities are intended to increase the quantity and, more importantly, the quality of graduates prepared to enter the professional transportation workforce. Some of the activities UTCM will support include:

Course Development. Awards will be made to develop new transportation courses. These would be proposed by faculty and professional staff and are intended to enrich courses available for students, as well as for professional development. It is anticipated that these may be replicated in transportation programs at other universities.

Program Development. UTCM will support awards for the development of new transportation programs. These could be within a department or interdisciplinary in nature. The grant would support the activities necessary for the development and approval of a new degree or program, including curriculum development and support for those shepherding the proposal through the process. The development of other types of education activities, such as short courses, outreach programs, or curriculum analysis and enhancement may also be supported.

More information on UTCM Education goals and programs may be found on the UTCM web site, <http://utcm.tamu.edu> under "Education."

Technology Transfer (T2) Projects

Some of the T2 activities that will be considered for UTCM sponsorship include local, state and/or national conferences; professional development activities, including short courses, webinars, and online education; outreach programs for K-12 and higher education; diversity initiatives; and activities that enhance communications and opportunities for collaboration between transportation-related programs at TAMU.

More information on UTCM T2 goals and programs may be found on the UTCM web site, <http://utcm.tamu.edu> under "Technology Transfer."

Selection Process

Preliminary Proposals (PPs) will be used to determine which projects will be invited to submit a Formal Proposal. After the PP submission deadline, the UTCM Executive Committee and Advisory Board will rank PPs based on their relevance to the center's theme and objectives, merit and overall quality of the submittals. After results are compiled, the Executive Committee will select which PIs to invite to submit Formal Proposals, taking into consideration:

- rankings
- overall program balance between research focus areas, departments, colleges and agencies at TAMU
- support for existing and new faculty and staff
- timeliness of topic
- potential for seeding long-term initiatives
- potential for sustainable long-term impact
- potential for leveraged funding
- collaborative efforts
- other issues of concern

In addition to these criteria, the UTCM recognizes that the quality and on-time delivery of research products are of the utmost importance to the overall UTC research program. Accordingly, in the project evaluation and selection process, funding may be denied to prospective PIs with a record of overdue or poor quality research products.

More information, including the procurement cycle timeline, FAQs and a listing of Executive Committee and Advisory Board members, can be found on the UTCM web site under "[Apply for Funding](http://utcm.tamu.edu/funding/index.stm)" (<http://utcm.tamu.edu/funding/index.stm>).

Helpful Hints

- UTCM seeks to provide lasting partnerships between TTI and the academic community. Therefore, proposals that provide opportunities for collaboration between TTI and the academic community are strongly encouraged.
- UTCM seeks to foster collaboration between academic departments and programs on the Texas A&M campus with an interest in transportation issues. Therefore, proposals that create partnerships between different departments and programs are strongly encouraged.
- UTCM encourages researchers to seek opportunities for leveraging funds. While matching is not required by the terms of the UTCM grant, proposals that leverage additional funding sources, especially those with long-term potential, are strongly encouraged.
- UTCM seeks to have a lasting impact on transportation. Accordingly, projects with deliverables that will continue to provide benefits beyond the life of the grant are strongly encouraged.
- If the Preliminary Proposal is for a research project, a clear link to one or more of the Research Focus Areas should be demonstrated in the proposal.
- All research projects sponsored by UTCM must have meaningful student involvement.
- All research projects sponsored by UTCM must have a technology transfer component.
- Review all materials, especially FAQs and instructions, prior to submission.

Preliminary Proposal Format and Information

On the following page is the Preliminary Proposal form for research, education, and technology transfer projects. Preliminary Proposals should be no longer than 2 pages. This form is available on the UTCM web site in Microsoft Word 2007 (.docx) along with answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs). Look under "[Apply for Funding](#)" (<http://utcm.tamu.edu/funding/index.stm>).



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Principal Investigator:

Preliminary Proposal - FY 09
Submission Deadline: Monday, September 22, 2008, 5:00 p.m.

1. Project Name:
2. List the name and complete contact information of the PI and all co-PIs. Only one person can be named as PI.
3. Is this a research, education, or technology transfer project, or a combination?
4. Who are the project participants? Which agencies, departments or academic units are involved?
5. Why is this project important? What are the long-term implications of the project? To which UTCM Research Focus Area(s) does your project apply?
6. What are you going to do? How will each project participant be involved?
7. How will project results be used?
8. How will you tell or show your results to others? Include a description of project deliverables and the timeline for delivery.
9. How will you involve students?
10. How much will you spend (including indirect costs)? Will additional sources of funds (leveraging) be available? If yes, how much and from what sources? Indicate whether leverage will be in cash or in kind.

Preferred method of submission is a Word file sent via e-mail to:
Martha Raney Taylor (m-raneytaylor@tamu.edu)
Alternatively, a hard copy may be submitted to the letterhead address or fax.
Deadline for Submission: September 22, 2008, 5 p.m. CST
Late submissions will not be accepted.